

# Washington State Patrol Media Release

**Chief Lowell Porter**

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Captain Fred Fakkema  
Government and Media Relations  
(360) 753-5299 – office  
(360) 753-5469 – fax  
<http://www.wsp.wa.gov>

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**Contact: Lieutenant Tris Atkins**  
**(360) 753-6173**

## **WSP Aircraft Recover Stolen Vehicles While Enhancing Traffic Safety**

Chief Lowell Porter announced today that in 2003, Washington State Patrol (WSP) aircraft detected over 17,000 speeding vehicles, including over 1,100 aggressive drivers. The Patrol's traffic congestion management program, known as Metro, prevented 600 miles of traffic backup and saved over \$890,900 in traffic-congestion-related costs.

WSP aircraft were equipped with LoJack and have quickly become an integral part of the Patrol's efforts to address the growing problem of vehicle theft in Washington. While on routine aerial traffic enforcement and congestion management flights, WSP LoJack-equipped aircraft have proven to be highly effective at detecting and recovering stolen vehicles.

These newly equipped WSP traffic aircraft recovered nearly 60% of the Patrol's LoJack-generated recoveries in 2003. A unique partnership between the WSP and the LoJack Corporation has turned the Patrol's cost-effective Cessna 182 aircraft into a dual purpose aircraft, ready to recover stolen vehicles while performing its traditional traffic safety mission.

The WSP began operating LoJack-equipped aircraft in the summer of 2003 and recovered seven stolen vehicles by the end of the year. Four of these recoveries were made while doing traffic congestion management over Seattle, two while working aerial traffic enforcement, and one while performing a transportation flight. Most of these stolen vehicles were recovered within hours after activation of the LoJack device.

LoJack installed the receivers and tracking equipment in the Patrol's fleet of traffic aircraft at no cost to the state. The LoJack device allows the aircraft to detect and track stolen vehicles equipped with a LoJack transmitter. The range for detecting a LoJack signal from the air can be in excess of 50 miles, which is nearly ten times that of a ground-based unit. Once the vehicle is located from the air, ground units assist with its recovery and apprehension of the suspects.

When a LoJack-equipped vehicle is stolen and the transmitter is activated, a bulletin is sent to the WSP Aviation Section with specific information pertaining to the vehicle. The bulletin includes the discrete code of the unit, its description, and the location and time it was reported stolen. This helps alert WSP pilots to alter their planned routes and altitudes to better assist in receiving a LoJack "hit" from the vehicle.

The WSP Aviation Section typically has a LoJack-equipped aircraft operating in the Seattle metropolitan area each weekday evening performing traffic congestion management. The WSP

also has other LoJack-equipped aircraft working throughout the state at various times performing traffic enforcement missions.

“The use of LoJack has decisively enhanced the public safety value of the Patrol’s time-tested and cost-effective aerial traffic program. The combination of LoJack and the Patrol’s aircraft, performing traditional aerial traffic missions, has proven highly successful, and the real winners are the citizens of Washington State,” stated Chief Porter.

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